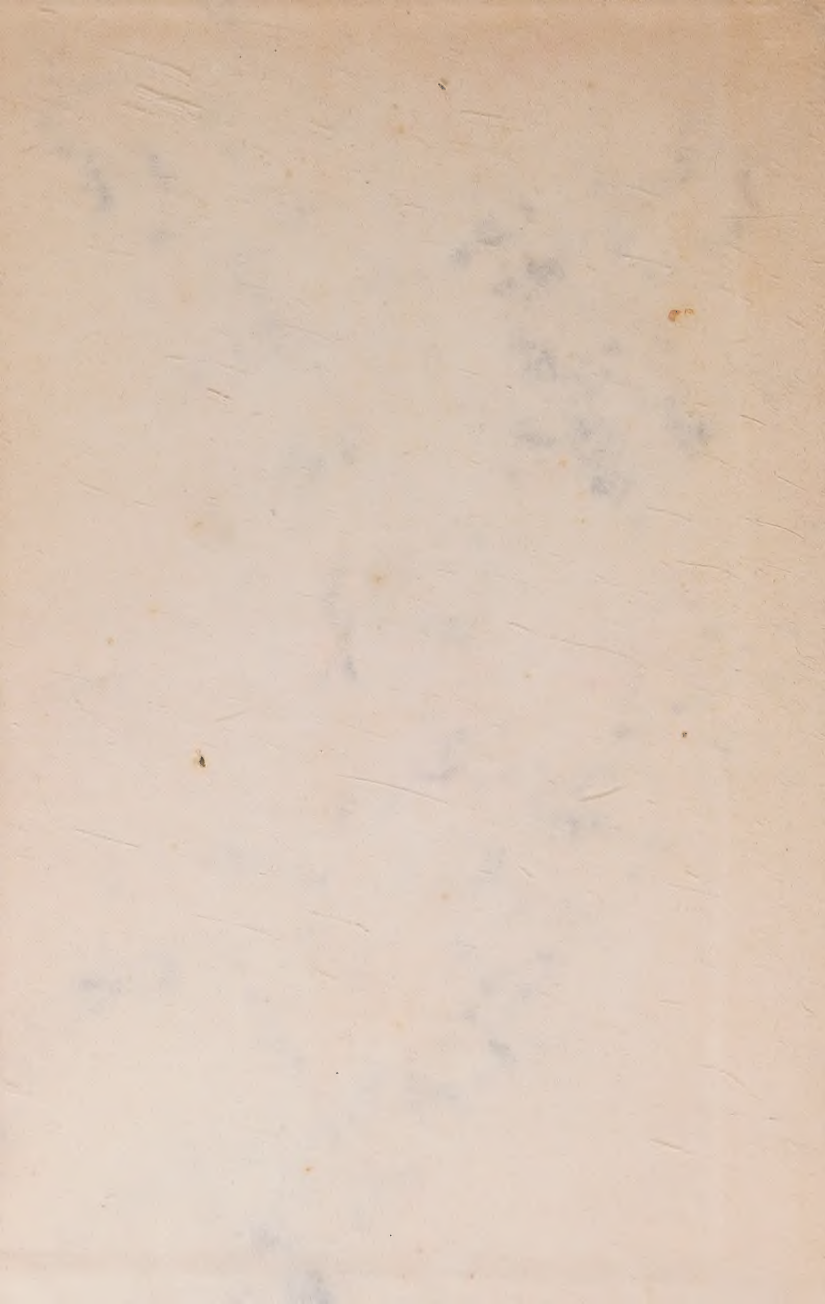
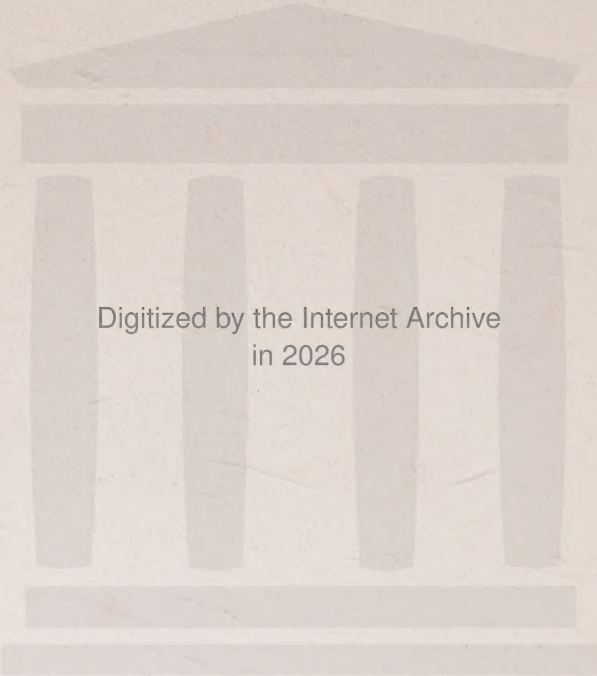


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LETTERS
FROM
OLD-TIME
VASSAR



Letters From Old-Time
Vassar



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Letters from Old-Time Vassar

*Written by A Student
in 1869-70*

Elbe Huffman



per H. B. M.

*Published by Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, 1915*

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Old-Time Vassar Series
800 numbered copies printed from type
of which this is number

88'

THE PLIMPTON PRESS
NORWOOD · MASS · U.S.A.

Letters From
Old-Time Vassar

ROSE VALLEY, Sept. 6, 1869

11.30 P. M.

I CANNOT sleep and must talk if I have to wake you up to do it!

Well do I know there is a home far to the west of me where all are asleep save one. *Mother* still sits in the fire-light waiting, as she has waited so many nights, till her selfish, inconsiderate, thoughtless young daughter gets home from some gay gathering of "the crowd."

It will be many a night before this girl breezily flutters in again, all aquiver to tell the happenings to mother, to make a scape-goat of mother when dreadful mistakes occurred, — no, I mean a

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Jericho, or whatever city was called a place of refuge. Then and there my responsibility rolled off like Christian's burden at the little gate. What a comfort a father confessor must be to a Catholic!

Let me take that little troubled look out of your eyes, the look I caught while sauntering up and down the long platform in that last half hour before the belated train arrived.

Mother, I had promised to give those successive men some time for parting words; to answer their last doleful "Will you ever?" with a cheerful "No, never." — To give each an encouraging (wordy) pat on the shoulder and my blessing for the next girl to whom their wavering affections might cling.

You would have thought I was pulling out for Heaven to have heard them,—

OLD-TIME VASSAR

and I am — for the heaven of my dreams!

Have no anxious moments about me. As the good old Sisters say at class meeting, "I am determined to fight a good fight, to press forward with an eye single to the glory of" — Vassar (?) to put it modestly.

I feel so excited, so emancipated, so — so translated with the joy of being at last on the way to college that I shout to you across the distance the words of old Caesar, "I am well. If you are well, all is well."

.

VASSAR COLLEGE

Sept. 14

IN telling about my experiences as I pass from glory to glory with no star differing much from another in brightness, I might begin every sentence with

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one expressive word: “enjoyed” my stay with Father at Niagara far beyond words; enjoyed the delightful boat ride down the Hudson from Albany on the “Mary Powell,” enjoyed the broken line of highlands that fences in the river on the west — Catskills, “firry” Shawangunks and distant Fishkills, — enjoyed the hilarious drive of two miles to the College; but when suddenly a high wall loomed up on my left and we were whirled through a forbidding iron gateway guarded by tall brick pillars that let on a broad drive to the five-storied, grim, dark brick building that was to be my only home for ten months without any parents handy, the word “enjoyed” dropped suddenly from my vocabulary (here you take breath) only to be reinstated in splendour when I enjoyed to the utmost, later, a compliment from

OLD-TIME VASSAR

President Raymond, regarding my entrance examinations.

If you will take the trouble to call at room C over the fire-wall stairs, number ninety seven, fourth floor, you will find me "at home."

I am seated at a small round table in our study parlor; five doors open into it, four of which lead to two small single bed rooms and two larger double ones.

My particular double window looks out over the eastern hills, while near at hand spread the lovely grounds flaming with flower beds; the observatory stands at the right, while the riding school and gymnasium building is on the left of the College proper.

They asked me if I would like to live on the fifth floor, but it is too near the sky line, heaven lies about me now without going any farther up.

LETTERS FROM

A letter directed to the College in my care, will be thankfully received.

So endeth the first day: (SELAH!)

Sept. 25

HAVE found out already how democratic life is here. Will not need expensive clothes, for one is not noticed among so many and can feel quite independent. Of course many girls do wear beautiful things. They get the attention I am not here to attract.

Everyone is greatly astonished to find a new scholar has one of the eight small fire-wall rooms so eagerly desired by the old girls. I have fixed it up and feel very comfortable indeed.

Oct. 3

RAINY Sunday, will not try church in town as am obliged by law to be present at afternoon services in chapel.

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Abbie and I went rowing yesterday, then to the orchard for apples and grapes.

The girls have a ghastly joke about the grapes we often have for dessert. For supper that evening we had grape sauce, which, the girls declare, is made from the skins of the previous meal with a little fresh fruit added! It tastes enough that way to take one's appetite.

We also went exploring to the 5th floor to inspect the fossil remains in the museum.

The other evening we walked back of the Gym by a new path that has just been opened on the side of a beautiful hill, crossed two bridges and reached the top of Sunset hill. From there we could see the College and the buildings on the right and left set in the midst of an autumn sunset. A mist was rising from the Hudson, dimming to a blue line the

LETTERS FROM

mountains beyond. It gives me a positive physical pain not to be able to share this picture with you.

Professor Van Ingen has just finished a large oil painting of the lower Genesee Falls, with a group of Indians seated around a camp fire. He sketched it from nature by a full moon so it might be perfect. The moonlight is reflected on the water, and an owl sits on a dead bough just under the edge of the Falls. The picture goes to Rochester. We Art girls are wildly enthusiastic about it and hang over the easel every spare moment watching the Professor mix and lay on the colors,—asking questions and making suggestions which he is never too busy to explain or laugh at. I must not attempt to describe him tonight. Will take a fair sheet and new pen to try to tell you what he has been in

OLD-TIME VASSAR

cordiality and hospitality to us homesick new girls.

He has already decided to take a few of us to spend a day at the Academy of Design in New York.

Oct. 10

THE third rainy Sabbath, but it lets us out of taking an hour's exercise.

I'm determined on "horse-man-ship" after the first of the year, both for exercise and the charming rides for miles up and down the river.

Professor Von Seldeneck, with his wife, always accompanies the girls — he of the broken nose and speech.

Am in Professor Orton's Bible class. We intend a modest course: origin of the different books, as given by the best authorities.

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Abbie and I came near missing breakfast. She stayed all night with me and we woke just one minute before the bell rang. There are three minutes of grace allowed and then the big doors swing shut. We met about four hundred other girls scrambling in front of the doors, tying sashes, hooking wrappers, jabbing hair-pins, and elbowing generally. All at once a "deep hush arose" as the pale gray figure of Miss Lyman appeared on the stairway above us, her eyes fixed on each separate girl and glaring with disapproval at the "struggling mass of humanity" below her, — as she called it when giving us her curtain lecture after morning chapel exercises. At this time when she is alone with the girls and women teachers, we are a graceless lot of criminals in her eyes.

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Miss Swayze, our elocution teacher, and seven of us, went chestnutting yesterday. The girls stirred up a "skunk cabbage" for my special benefit; I have never met with any of the frightful things in the west. Got back in time for a veal pot-pie dinner: meat, potatoes, and balls of steamed light dough with gravy poured over, then ice cream for dessert. Certainly good!

Later our crowd, laden with dates and apples, went rowing on the pretty lake. When we came in at four, Abbie found a box had come from home for her, so we just had to sample that! Of course we could eat no supper. After chapel I went into the next room to visit and they treated to macaroons and grapes; found something new in our make-up, — India-rubber stomachs.

LETTERS FROM

Oct. 14

NEVER stopped raining till Wednesday, but last Saturday was so lovely hardly any of the day was passed in the building. We got some fine chestnuts and spent most of the evening on the foot of my bed at the gas-burner roasting them on a hair-pin.

I'm really in love with this college, we live so much to ourselves, no teachers watching at our doors or always around "snooping."

Tell Al not to direct his letters care of Vassar "Female" College, they have taken that word from the name over the front entrance.

I was slightly amused at one remark in your letter, Father, about remembering you to Miss Lyman; but I have never told you anything about the teachers so will proceed to do so:

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Miss Lyman I have not spoken to since you left. She sits at the teacher's table at the head of the dining room during dinner, which occurs in the middle of the day, but is often not well enough to appear at the other meals. She nearly always reads the Bible and conducts morning chapel. At this time she lectures us on our misdeeds generally and holds us, like Mahomet's coffin, suspended between heaven and earth with fear lest her criticism and ridicule and scorn and contempt may become specific and personal. She has office hours, as have all the teachers, and only at those periods are we allowed to go to her—even if we were so benighted as to want to.

Whenever we are tardy at a class, or forget it, or cut chapel, the division teachers report it and we must go to

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Miss Lyman to be excused; sometimes she won't, though, and then the mark stands. Most of the girls seem to think she is quite cross.

Do you remember the woman who sat near Miss Lyman at table, dressed always in black with a large jet cross hanging by a chain from her waist? She is our physician, *Dr. Avery*, as she gave one poor girl to understand distinctly when she asked if this was *Miss Avery* to whom she spoke — “No, but it is *Dr. Avery*.”

She is very beautiful but so stern looking that when not animated she looks like a man rather than a woman. One day a girl stopped her in the halls to ask some small question. That lady deliberately took the unfortunate creature by the arm, led her up to the teacher's bulletin board and pointed out the office

OLD-TIME VASSAR

hours, saying, "at that time, if she would call, all her questions would be answered."

A story was going about her today that I can hardly believe, but the girls declare it is true. One of the girls fainted and her room-mate ran to Dr. Avery's office for some ammonia, but as it was not during regular hours, admittance was refused. We would probably not be allowed to die out of office hours. Isn't it a funny story though?

Of course if the students could run to the teachers at all times their rooms would be full.

Why even this morning the mail did not get here at the usual time and at nine I was forced to go to Latin; when I got back the corridor door was locked, not to be opened till the noon mail. With a lot of other impatient girls I scolded at the rules and then went up

LETTERS FROM

on the fifth floor to Drawing, got so interested we did not come down till five minutes to one. Then I washed my hands and went for my letter which the girls told me was waiting,— they will not allow us to distribute each other's mail.

Another joke (?) about Dr. Avery while we are near the subject: *She* had occasion to visit a certain room and was so very pleasant that one of the girls perked up and asked if a friend might not room with her. The woman froze instantly, and glaring around at Carrie said in her most sarcastic tone, "My dear, we are capable of running this institution ourselves and will make our own changes, when we need help we will let you know."

The richest article about Vassar College came out in a Review the other day, written by a man who has charge of a

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woman's college. I guess he was mad because Vassar is so renowned. He said among other things, that President Raymond was a good enough sort of man but he was ruled by Miss Lyman who was the "high-cock-o-lorum" of the college.

Prof. Farrar is giving us a course of lectures on Chemistry and I go to the laboratory for experiments. He has been perfectly lovely and will help me to round out former work along that line.

You know how dear our Art teacher, Prof. Van Ingen, is. He makes the girls feel so much at home in the studio and takes a world of interest in their work. I expect to talk about him in every letter. He is a burly Dutchman reared within sound of Antwerp chimes — has a homely, kindly face and very approachable manners, but stands no nonsense. He

LETTERS FROM

just proceeds on the assumption we are innocent till we are proven guilty—which is more than some of the teachers do. He has been especially lovely to me and says some nice things you will like to hear: the girls say he thinks I have “a good eye for proportion, light and shade, and work fast, and am capable of doing about what I want to do.” Doesn’t that encourage one to work? and I swear by high heaven and the marching stars and the sun and the comets—but there! the Bible says “swear not at all.”

We are soon to begin Mineralogy with Prof. Orton, who has made extensive collections in Natural History for the museums here and at Cornell. They say he is very interesting, but he does plaster his hair so tightly to the back of his head it looks slab-sided.

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The cabinets on the fifth floor contain six thousand labeled specimens and I must know each one when I see it later on.

Oct. 25

YOU remember the lecture Miss Lyman gave the girls for pushing at the dining room doors, well, yesterday morning just after breakfast some of us were standing before the chapel doors when up came Hattie and gave me a sounding whack on the back. I was turning to run after her when I saw Miss Lyman, hand outstretched, cap bows flying and finger pointed threateningly toward poor Hattie. "Never," said she, "while you are an inmate of V. C. do you *dare* so much as lay your finger on a pupil, do you hear?"

One of our "sacred trusts" has nearly worn out. You see we have cane-seated

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chairs in all our rooms, but of course when we step up in them to lower windows, light gas, etc., they break some. So Miss Lyman lectured on the subject, begging us not to misuse them, *that she could not watch and find out who did it* and it was a "sacred trust" she placed in us.

Not long ago when those Presbyterian ministers came — one hundred and fifty strong — she told us not to act as if we'd never seen men before and when the President presented the Moderator we should rise and then "subside." It looked fine too, and we girls were tickled nearly to death — so much excitement often kills!

A Dr. Adams and Dr. Cox of New York talked. The former made a fine speech but our President made a better when he introduced them.

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I do like him so much but am a trifle afraid he relies on Miss Lyman's judgment too far. She is so very determined that almost her own will would move the College, — is dying of consumption and wants to die working. I have heard that two or three fine men left Vassar for other colleges because she interfered with their departments.

Just think, five pages foolscap — let me rest my head after so much gossip.

Nov. 15

PROF. VAN INGEN took us out on the highest roof of the College the other day to get an extended view and climb ladders. We enjoyed the trip all the more because of a sneaking notion that Miss Lyman would not approve. The teachers are about as much afraid of her as are the pupils. Only yesterday

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some of them were just outside the dining room when the last bell struck, but she shut the doors in their very faces; my! but they were mad.

Think I will go into town Sunday for if the President preaches we will go to sleep — he does “go on forever.” But he is a fine reader; the Bible, Dickens, Shakespeare — all have a new meaning. I am just crazy about that man, even if he preaches too long when he forgets to confine himself to his notes, and if he does pray and pray until the most devout girls crawl up to see what on earth the man is up to, and even if he did keep us an hour in chapel today telling a very prosy story,— yet he is a most “effective” and graceful man in the estimation of the college generally. He is the best informed man on every subject who belongs to Vassar and that is saying

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a good deal, for Profs. Backus, Orton and Farrar are prodigies of learning.

One of our girls who lives at Hudson went home yesterday and I stayed with Abbie. After the ten o'clock bell rang I got out of our window and ran two doors up the corridor to Belle and Fannie's room, climbed their window and perched on the upper sash. They were nearly frightened out of their wits at first and I had to say "peace, be still" before they found out who it was. Then they begged me to come in but their window made such a racket I ran back for fear of alarming the corridor teacher. Soon there was a sound as of one running and into our bed fell Belle. In a moment the sound was repeated and in piled Fannie, then we were bombarded by Clemmie; one of us had a badly bumped head and the whole lot

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came very near being caught on the return trip — as the watchman, Thomas, padded slowly down the hall just after their door clicked shut.

Thanksgiving

DRESSED Abbie's hair in puffs before she went to Brooklyn and am going to "fix up" Kate and three of the other girls.

We are sure of turkey at dinner for barrels of them came yesterday — feet sticking out.

We girls just wandered; rowed on the lake and waved at a lot of nice looking young guests — men of course, — went to the library and read some of the short stories in the Dictionary. Their merit today is their brevity; in my opinion Webster is a fine author.

At luncheon we were allowed to fill

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our plates and take them to our rooms. We spent the afternoon getting out our best clothes, doing each other's hair, rushing about to exclaim "Does this look all right?" "I am a perfect fright tonight." "I washed my hair today and it just won't stay where I put it." "That dress is *so* becoming," etc. And indeed they were a beautiful sight — all the girls. I nearly broke my fingers squeezing Hattie's dress together and mine was none too comfortable. Finally we were ready for the show.

We filed into the long dining room when the doors opened at five-fifteen.

The tables were glittering with cut glass and a world of lovely decorations.

When Pres. Raymond struck the bell, five hundred seated themselves, bowed for grace, and then inspected their menu cards. We tasted the whole program,

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not because we were hungry, but just as a matter of education; we didn't want to miss anything that was coming to us.

We fairly groaned because our dresses were getting so tight. To tell the truth I made my belt looser and not one of the girls even smiled. They would have been only too glad to do likewise but their waists opened at the back. We nearly died laughing at each other's distressed expression. The way the poor things scattered after dinner was a sight. I can't tell what all did, but the whole of Parlor 97 loosened hooks.

Later came the President's reception, then chapel to hear Dr. Raymond read. It was perfectly delightful, the crowning event of a fine day. I forgot everything but him. No one can ever read "Old

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Marley was dead —” as he did. Many fine selections followed.

There is even a romance about our riding teacher. He is a titled German, killed his man in a duel, was banished, but has slipped back twice for a short visit, and intends soon to make a formal return to his native country.

My! how the girls are carrying on. I am the only one who is behaving herself. Expected to have a beautiful thought to write just now for a thrill ran up my back, but the girls have scared it away. Perhaps it is only the beginning of a cold.

My writing looks fearful, all because I have on Tea's big bracelets, regular handcuffs.

Last Sunday was Hallow e'en. Some of the girls got up at twelve, went down the fire-wall stairs backward, to meet

LETTERS FROM

their fate. One ran into the arms of the amazed Thomas on his nightly round. Another was less fortunate; on turning around with a seraphic smile of pure content, she saw, with popping eyes, the dignified form of President Raymond. The way she flew back up the stairs and fell at our feet, was a miracle to him as well as to us. We cautiously leaned over the banisters and looked down the well of four stories to see him yet standing there shaking his head, while we shook in our boots and then scattered.

No wonder Miss Lyman calls our corridor "the Vassar College race course."

How I would like to drop in on you all just now; what a nice thing it would be if we could take wing and fly to our friends. Methinks folks would see little

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me pretty often, with my Sunday clothes under my wing cutting the air towards the west.

Nov. 30

AM nearly dead to get my box — know my dress is grand! In the studio the other day I remarked to the girls that I was going to put up my hair instead of wearing it short and curly for the great 10th of December. Prof. Van Ingen turned up his nose — and a horrid homely one it is too — he can't bear water-falls and frizzes. The hair is worn low on the neck, braided over a chignon, large, but very pretty. My hair falls to my shoulders in large waves. I could tie it up and look stylish.

Gym today nearly twisted my arms off, came back so tired I could hardly manage more than two dishes of ice cream.

LETTERS FROM

Finally took another big one to even up with the other girls. This evening we are all sorry we had it, for tomorrow must do without it.

Don't think we eat too much, we really do not — my breakfast was three small cakes — I ought to be more careful to explain about our spreads perhaps, but there are so many of us, none gets overcharged.

You asked to what church the College showed preference. Really there is none shown, no doctrine or creed but what the whole orthodox church could subscribe to. The President is a Baptist, Miss Lyman an Episcopalian.

When the Presbyterian Synod was here, Dr. Raymond said in his introduction that by this invitation he did not mean to place this denomination above any other, as he would invite any other

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body of Christians also — we were all brothers and sisters from a Christian point of view, working for the same heaven, etc.

Wish I had time to make a little pencil sketch of Prof. Van Ingen's crayon of the Baron, our riding teacher; the nose is a little too pronounced but very like.

My box came. The girls just adore the fruit cake; we eat a bite and then groan that anything so delectable must pass away.

Dec. 5

ABBIE is in my room making a copy of some drawings, but I must finish a lot of work tonight. If I don't do everything at just the right time it is impossible to catch up; each hour has its "appointed task."

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Prof. Van Ingen was talking about the entertainment in the studio yesterday and I mentioned the fact that we wrote home for our dresses, so he asked what color mine was. When I said white, he remarked that he would be out certain, just on purpose to see me. But when I told him I intended to put up my hair, he hurt himself laughing at the picture I would make. He told Patty the other day how to wear her hair—in Dutch braids wound around her head. He is a Dear, but so ridiculous! He gave Patty and me a fine photo of himself.

Last Friday afternoon when the essay class met, Prof. Backus, head of English Literature, had the best two essays read aloud. Mine came first and was read very nicely indeed, but the girl, thinking my name was fictitious, read it right out

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in class, so all knew the writer. At first I felt very bad about it but when Prof. Backus praised it highly and said it was better than the others because I used purer Saxon language and my essay was a fine example of the easy, flowing, graceful, and simple style (he used all those adjectives) — I nearly died the death of the righteous. The girls in the Rhetoric classes also were refreshed by it and his praises. It was as much of a surprise to me as to anyone for but two hour's work had been done on it, but he says the more time you spend on an essay the more labored it is instead of being free and easy in style.

Just here I would like to tell you how my reading is praised in the Elocution class because my voice and expression are "so uncommon" good, but will restrain myself lest you may think I am

LETTERS FROM

an earthen pitcher and easily "cracked." You see I am gradually accumulating fame,— school-girl fame — but a real glorious fame that just naturally and gradually works one to death.

Am finishing this in chapel; the President is preaching from the 6th chapter, 10th verse of Ephesians, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord." As there is not a "brethren" in this congregation to whom do you suppose he applies this text?

Dec. 12

I'VE tried three pens already on this letter for I want to launch upon a full description of the great 10th, Friday night, when the College Society gave its banquet.

Everywhere were flowers and wreaths and chains of green. On the center of the chapel stage was a great mass of

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roses placed between the President's chair and that of the President of the Society who is a senior from Cincinnati.

After lunch a hush fell on the College, each girl was busy dressing for the grand affair. I did not do up my hair. Prof. Van Ingen nearly took a fit when I wore it done up one morning and all the girls told me I looked so much better with it down, guess I'll be obliged to keep it so after all my bother about that lovely "switch."

At eight o'clock in came the company and most of the girls with them; we poor unfortunates without friends, sat in the gallery. There were many fine looking men, though some of the younger ones looked a little green, many cadets from West Point and a reporter from Yale. The latter created quite a flutter. Prof. Ritter gave an organ introduction,

LETTERS FROM

a prayer from Pres. Raymond followed, more wonderful music, recitations, etc. After the program Dr. Raymond and Miss Storrs led the way to the dining hall.

The caterer had arranged the tables the whole length of the room, so we passed down on one side to admire the decorations, pyramids of roses, ice-cream, cakes, confectionery and fruits.

After the collation we promenaded up and down the corridors but not in the transverse one, for Miss Lyman told us in morning chapel it was reserved for the guests, and also that she wanted to see no "miss-ish-ness" (we finally found that this means flirting), but we had a good time anyhow.

Prof. Van Ingen asked where my switch was. I told him one of the other girls had it on.

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At 11:15 the bell struck for those who had no company to go to their rooms, but we kept on walking and were met by Miss Lyman, who stunned us with a look and said "Young ladies, are you obeying?" Any fool would have said "Yes, ma'am." Just then some man took her attention and we took ourselves off.

Dec. 19

I ENCLOSE the extract from the pen of that Yale reporter that you may see what he says about us. We do not like it very much. These colleges poke fun at Vassar because she wants to make this institution stand for as much for women as Yale and Harvard do for men. The same text books are used, but our sex and youth as a college are against us.

LETTERS FROM

Dec. 24, 25, 26

I SIT tonight after tea alone in my room, with my table drawn under the gas jet, to write a few lines to my home folks.

For the first time I realize that Christmas is here. The girls who live near have all gone, fifty only are left and we will bunch together on the lower floors for the holidays as my floor is deserted.

Fannie, Kate, Etta, Hattie and I got our home boxes at the same time. You should have seen the spread: roast chicken, preserves, cakes, French candy, fruit, etc., etc.

After enjoying our frugal repast we left a few things and went visiting; then back to entertain ourselves with songs and recitations. About eleven we thought we heard some one coming along the corridor, so we popped out the

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light and sat huddled upon the floor near the register while I told ghost stories by the light of the moon — mighty sorry afterwards, for I had to hold their hands the rest of the night. To make things more thrilling there sounded the distant hooting of an owl, the kind that screams out a wild and prolonged high note followed by three soft muffled hoots.

We paused, but as nothing dreadful happened I proceeded with my description of the man who was buried while in a trance and his sensations before he was dug up.

Just then a heavy body thumped against the window, a big white object lurched heavily and fluttered by with its unearthly screech.

One of the girls scrambled to her feet, rushed frantically in and out of our bed

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rooms, clumped about on the bare floors and finally came back just as we had made up our minds she was "clean daffy." She had been turning all our shoes and slippers upside down to avert evil omens.

All of us have our pet aversions — borrowed doubtless from the cave days — though we cannot consent to call them superstitions. We sat up till we could say "Merry Christmas."

.

New Year's Day

OUR parlor is still disreputable; shells and orange skins on the floor, table filled with papers, handkerchiefs, ribbons, curl papers, etc. Fannie lying on the sofa reading "Lalla Rookh," Clemmie, to whom the curl papers belong, asleep in the bed room, Hattie sitting at Miss Strong's feet by the

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register while I am resting on two chairs at a window looking eastward.

We girls are certainly treated hospitably; we lodge out every night, our fare is delicious, our time is our own, the whole College and Library are for our use.

I send you a crumb of melting fruit cake we had for dinner besides turkey, cold boned turkey, ham and oysters.

Prof. Farrar turns over his kitchen for us to cook all sorts of messes in, not because we can be hungry but just to keep us out of mischief, I suspect.

President Raymond, the blessed man, gave us the treat of our lives for two hours last night reading from Dickens.

Interregnum till eight. Explanations in order. Dressed myself in my new brown serge, neck cut low with round crochet collar and narrow black velvet

LETTERS FROM

about my throat, then Hattie came in for me to fasten her plaid dress after breaking the fingers of the girls in her room. At last got it together but am afraid to tell a joke lest it pop. Will not sit next her at meal time.

We thought to cut chapel but the exercises are usually so short our consciences spoke up and got the better of us. Alas! one of the teachers, the poorest reader of them all, dragged us through a long sermon. Certainly was caught in a trap.

One year is so short to accomplish much work here — yet so long to be away from home.

Jan. 8

WE had hash this morning for breakfast; put vinegar on it to take away the funny taste and it was real good. Everything goes.

OLD-TIME VASSAR

New girls have arrived since the holidays. I thought the College was full but there is always room while they can "double up."

Miss Lyman has been changing some of the girls to other rooms, not on account of bad behavior; if any grow fond of each other they must look out or they'll be separated. She does not take much stock in school-girl intimacies; she and Dr. Avery are much alike and we would as soon go to a sphinx for sympathy as to either of them.

One of the girls took the Doctor a note from her father requesting that his daughter be excused from half her exercise (one hour each day if weather will permit) on account of delicate constitution. When she carried the note to Dr. Avery the latter gave the girl a scolding for coming to College if she was not

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well, but could not excuse her unless she would take Gym each day and then walk a little; so the girl will take her usual exercise, but when she feels bad will excuse herself.

Some days I am so hurried with work that I open a window, lean out with a book and am "in the open air for half an hour" or more if the weather is suitable.

So much for arbitrary rules even if they are good.

An incident like the following, so musically commemorated in poetry, does not happen often here, but who knows when a like dirge may be sung over any of us if this dreadful weather does not let up — our teachers never will, they are inexorable, determined to have their cwt. of flesh.

Now, like Ulysses, I will rule my

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spirit and proceed to give you the tragic poem entitled "*Sixty Minutes every Day.*"

The shades of night were falling fast
As round the College quickly passed
A girl, who plods her weary way
Because she heard the President say
"*Sixty minutes every day.*"

Her brow was sad, her eyes below
Were red and swollen as with woe;
But in her ear still sadly rung
The accents of that awful tongue
"*Sixty minutes every day.*"

From the windows gleamed the light
Of cozy rooms all warm and bright;
She thought it very hard to bear
That she must be in the open air
"*Sixty minutes every day.*"

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“Come in,” her room-mate called “and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast.”
A tear shone in her mild blue eye,
But still she answered with a sigh,
“*Sixty minutes every day.*”

She thought of the warning oft repeated
When in the chapel all were seated,
Of “men with dogs, who prowling round
Were very likely to be found”
In her “*Sixty minutes every day.*”

So fearing, trembling, on she went
Till all her vital force was spent,
And chilled by evening damp and dew
She fell, still faintly moaning too,
“*Sixty minutes every day.*”

She, by Thomas in his round
Half buried in the snow was found;
And as he took her in his grasp
She raised her head and feebly gasped —
“*Sixty minutes every day.*”

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There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, yet beautiful, she lay.
She died a martyr to the cause,
Trying to keep those awful laws —
“*Sixty minutes every day.*”

Would you like to know how I worked all day Saturday? Well, Prof. Van Ingen has been giving us lessons in different kinds of drawing, and Wednesday he gave us some boxes to do, — apparently unimportant work so I did not finish mine.

But Friday he asked me if I had drawn them yet. When I told him I had not, he said “Miss H—— I will tell you that if you go on drawing as I hope you will, you will regret it some day if you don’t understand geometrical drawing and perspective.” So I got out my hard pencils and heavy paper and spent the whole day on that alone.

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The work looked very nicely too, he almost praised it — he “grunted.”

Jan. 18

PROF. VAN INGEN finished a fine water color last Friday called “A Dutch Dealer in Dogs.” There are seven in it; one was in a cage while the man was training another. The local “color” is especially fine. He is now making a sketch of Patty; she draws so well, has great natural talent — also very beautiful braids of long light hair.

Professor said this morning that I ought to come on and graduate, for I was the right kind of a girl to do the work with credit to the College as well as to myself. He thinks all that is necessary is to set my mind on anything to accomplish it.

Lovely, isn't it for him to show so

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much interest? He only echoes my dearest wish.

Jan. 23

THE weather was so delightful Saturday that three of us started for Sunrise Hill two miles distant.

We got under way at nine o'clock, ran up and down hills, walked stone fences, and at last reached the top. It is the highest near peak on this side of the river and gives a fine view into three States.

At the eastern extremity of the Catskills was a long white "postage stamp" outlined against the dark green firs which I knew was the "Mountain House."

We could see three or four towns set at various inclines — indeed you might call the whole country a thinly settled town.

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On our way back we stopped at a little family graveyard whose stones were crumbling and so moss-covered the inscriptions could barely be read. One man was eighty-seven years old when he died and was buried in 1811; another fifty, and died in 1807. On his headstone was this verse:

“Remember me as you pass by,
As you are now so once was I,
As I am now so you must be,
Prepare for death and follow me.”

The girls with difficulty restrained me from chiseling that old answer below it:

“To go with you I’ll not consent,
Until I know which way you went.”

Time has been over for so long with these occupants that it was really a cheerful spot to visit.

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In the evening was a "Shoo Fly" reception at the Gym building, so after prayers we all made a grand rush for the scene of action.

In dancing, the "gents" could only be distinguished from the ladies by a bow of the College colors — rose and silver-gray — on the left shoulder.

The girls have begged me to learn to dance for I love the music and am light on my feet, but somehow don't get the "consent of my mind" to go back on three generations of old-fashioned Methodist ministers in any such fashion, and the girls can't laugh the notion out of my head.

Our exams. pull off next week. I've not missed in Latin or French reviews and do not feel uneasy.

Spent two mornings last week in the cabinet of mineralogy going over the

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whole book with the specimens and am ready for that.

We have no end of fun once in a while in this class, — very quiet fun, mind you. The girl who sits next to me is exceedingly nervous, and if her name is called unexpectedly — without counting down the row as sometimes happens — she cannot collect herself and wildly begs me to come to her aid, so I stand up and recite in her place. She is saved and Professor, who does not know one girl from another, is happy also.

One incident about the advanced exams. that occurred just after my entrance ones — believe I never told you about. Took them to get standing in the College so there would be no unknown ground in case I wanted to return and finish the course. Could hardly help passing well for I had taught most of

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the subjects for two years in the High School at home — an experience I certainly am most thankful for. Well, in the geometry quiz after the Professor got warmed up and began to ask questions, to prove a point I made use of anything I could get hold of like a drowning man, and quoted a theorem further on. The Professor enjoyed that and we had quite a genial time. He gave me fine grades. Nobody but a man would have been so liberal. I hate to say it about women teachers but the smartest of them are so literal and narrow that a pupil is seldom given credit for original thought, but must be letter perfect and recite by rote to get 98. It was one teacher's proud boast that she never gave 100 even if no fault could be found with the girl's work. She arrogated more credit to herself than

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did the Almighty, who could say
"This day shalt thou be with me in
Paradise."

The thief surely got 100.

Sunday

AM finishing my home letter on this
small tablet in afternoon chapel.
The service drones along; I look out
the west window at the fair picture of
the setting sun and imagine all whom I
love to be beyond its cloud-veiled rim.
Then by some vagrant fancy those sunken
graves of yesterday appear as an "after
image" to point out the futility of effort
that but rounds into a grave and then,
forgotten, shrinks into its mother shell:
— poor feet that plodded after the plow
in search of a harvest, — poor brain
with its swift and passionate impulses
drained of its life-flow, — poor soul that

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has gone to meet its Judge in some undiscovered country.

How little it profiteth a man to scan the universe of endeavor with his fraction of an eye—here but a moment and gone the next.

This view of life is pagan but it has not yet brought the submissive spirit supposed to be its corollary—I am distinctly unhappy. Herbert's little poem sticks to my brain cells:

“Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright,
Bridal of earth and sky,
Sweet dewes shall weep thy fall tonight,
For thou must die.”

I open the hymn-book at random to find some hope to cling to, and read:

“The swift declining day,
How fast its moments fly

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While evening's broad and gloomy shade
Gains on the western sky."

Here I am about to drop a tear but think better of it as a stir occurs for the closing hymn; it is one Miss Lyman selects about every other day. The words take on a new meaning for me tonight.

"Hail, tranquil hour of closing day,
Begone disturbing care!
And look, my soul, from earth away
To Him who heareth prayer.

Calmly the day forsakes our heaven
To dawn beyond the west,
So let my soul in life's last even,
Retire to glorious rest."

Leonard Bacon's inspiration has kindled mine and Richard is himself again.
"Ein feste Burg," etc.

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Jan'y. 25

DEAR me, I got a compliment this evening and must pass it along while it is fresh.

In our elocution class we are often called on to recite extracts instead of read. I gave "Cowper's Grave" and when I got through Miss Swayze said it was done very well indeed.

At her table tonight she told the girls she did wish they could have been in her eighth period class today and heard Miss H. recite, for she did beautifully. The girls have been talking about it all evening. Miss S. thinks I should take private special instructions from some eminent teacher as my voice is too good to lose.

Oh mother, *why* didn't you allow me to accept the offer Uncle John made you years ago, to take me to New

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York with him and have my voice trained? I heard him beg you to do it "for the child's sake," and well remember the finality of your reply — "you would rather see me in my coffin." I feel in my very soul the unutterable things that are akin to success. Never do I recite as well as before an audience — kindled like a torch by their reflex emotion. Perhaps I have missed my calling!

I take Logic and Political Economy under Professor Backus this semester. You should see his Cassius-like proportions — "Long, and lank and brown as is the ribbed sea-sand," and above all his keen blue eyes. He is the favorite teacher, being exceedingly interesting and genial.

As usual, at one o'clock, four hundred hungry girls stepped on toes and dresses,

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crowded and pinched, before the dining-hall doors. After you once get in the swim it carries you right along — there goes the tea-bell and an hour of my writing time will be lost.

I have been to brown bread and milk, peaches and crackers, then went up immediately to pray over it before colic sets in, and now I am keeping “silent time” (20 minutes) in the most approved manner — approved by me — I mean.

In the mornings Miss Lyman conducts “chapel” and if we do not happen to hear what hymn she gives out we turn to “Hebron” certain of finding the words under it.

Jan. 30

ANOTHER Sabbath. Had a very good Bible lesson this morning on the seventh Chapter of Matthew.

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Prof. Orton does not believe that *sincerity* alone is a saving grace and quotes that passage in Proverbs, "There is a way that *seemeth* right unto a man but the end thereof is the way of death."

Those old writers had many reservations when compiling the Bible, witness: "Rebuke a wise man and he will love thee" — probably a neat piece of sarcasm. "Proverbs" is full of them.

Oh, how do you like my Notman photos? — just the same sad look as ever. Odd, that I have such an expression when "at rest."

Enclosed please find a gold net for Kate, they are all the rage here.

At chapel this afternoon Professor Backus took for his text "Have faith in God." He spoke without opening the Bible or using notes — an earnest, sincere talk.

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To an eager ambitious girl, set for a year in an environment so foreign to the quiet life of her little home town, it is certainly an inspiration to come in close friendly contact with such teachers as these two men — Van Ingen and Backus — whose names so often appear in my letters.

In the world of Art and Endeavor which they represent and we are studying about, it is always what man has done or can do that interests and invites.

The miracle God performs with a simple flower, a sunset on the Hudson-encircled hills, the mystery of a night full of stars, is too wonderful to look at sometimes, it gives a feeling of depression — “Lord, what is man?”

But the work man has done through the ages I may be able to trace and become, perhaps, a tiny part of. Any-

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how the future is calling to me and lies upon my soul.

.

Miss Lyman led at chapel and made a beautiful prayer. One of the seniors left last week on account of a death in her family, so they pray for her every evening. We had a dear little supper then silent time, and I closed the exercises of the day by going to prayer meeting. Now must say good-night before taps.

If you are the same family you were last year about this time, I can see you all in a row in the amen corner at church.

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February

ETTA and Em came up with me after society meeting where the following subject was discussed. "Which

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has the more beneficial influence on character, prosperity or adversity?" Of course the "Sillies" settled it in favor of the latter and I felt called upon to say a few words which created plenty of laughter but did not change the hoary verdict.

Well, as it was Saturday night we gathered the clan and had a blow-out. We scoured the wash-bowl to hold the lemonade. Put to boil over the gas some sugar appropriated from the breakfast table. Etta took my pearl-handled pen knife and with the soap dish for a mallet cut a hole in a can of sardines, then we washed out the soap dish and made it the receptacle of lemon juice and the fish.

At ten the festivities drew to a close and we all went to bed. This time I was determined not to sleep in the

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middle as there are four blankets on my bed. So poor Etta, not knowing any better, took the center rush and tossed covers to the foot of the bed all night till Em, between the ice-cold wall and the cold air (for both inside and storm windows were open) was nearly frozen.

The girls I know here are such sane gay girls, full of fun yet doing fine work along their chosen lines; they are very good musicians.

This afternoon I braided Katie's hair in two braids of eighteen strands each. They fell nearly half a yard below her waist and looked wonderful, for her hair is so even, thick and long.

The whole table of Seniors spent tea-time looking at her, guess they thought the braids were false. Kate is to spend the evening with Prof. Farrar's family.

Abbie has just come back from seeing

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her sister and family off for the Orient. She is crying a little and small wonder, for Miss Lyman's prayer was "grave-digging" tonight. Benson J. Lossing lectured on Art last week. He talked an hour and a half but I never changed position. He began when time and man began, traced the footsteps of Art through every age, Egyptian, Persian, Hindustani, Greek, Roman, Dark Ages, Crusades Renaissance — showing the influence of each period in the development of his interesting subject.

Dr. Avery visited the Art Gallery the other morning and came to where I was standing at my easel putting on crayon with one hand while stumping with the other. She seemed much interested at the dexterity shown in using both hands, and made herself very agreeable. My! what a woman she is though, enough to

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scare one to death. To hear some of the girls tell it, she has never said one pleasant word to them. She gives very instructive lectures three times a week to the whole College, and is a beautiful reader. The faculty seem to enjoy them as much as anybody.

Our critical New Brunswick Annie called to Prof. Van Ingen one day "Just look at her (meaning me) using both hands." "I don't care," he growled, "if she rubs the crayon on with her nose too, just so she gets it on right."

We are now promoted to the Art Gallery to work and Prof. tells what he calls a good joke on me: when our class first came down he led us about our new quarters, discussing many of the paintings, their values, the artists, etc., and to get some idea of our tastes he asked what pictures we would like to copy when we

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began in oils. There was one, divine in color and softness of tone that I had long worshipped, so when it came my turn, with exalted look and finger, I pointed to the Madonna Seggiola. It nearly took the Professor's breath away, he laughed so hard. "There is nothing like aspiration, my child!" said he. But he asked me and I told him the truth. I guess by the way he chuckles to himself he gets a world of fun out of our insane remarks about Art. — I wanted to write "inane" but that word is too weak.

When he put me on a full length cast of the Venus de Milo, I fixed my paper, pointed my charcoal and sketched, perspected and rubbed out till I was discouraged and the paper was a smudge. Just then to my dismay, Prof. said over my shoulder "What's this, your Venus

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is ready to topple over.” “I know it but she won’t come right, I’ve tried it faithfully.” Then he showed me the power of her and how the exquisite line of the perpendicular poised the whole figure as she rested so easily on one hip. Things began to straighten out. He said “Get you a fresh paper and begin again.” They all left for dinner but I took a fair sheet and sketched in lightly a rough outline of the whole figure before stopping. When they came back Prof. could hardly say enough in praise of it, so I realized how disappointed my botch of the morning had made him feel.

Commendation from him creates a blissful “atmosphere” in the studio.

Kate brought in her pillow and stayed all night with us so she could study in peace. Last night one of the first-floor girls whose best friend gets mad at her

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once in so often, came up to pour out her grief and homesickness, and I had to hold her poor little sweaty hand all night.

Let me tell you a joke on me or Belle. She has a lover — I don't remember the "name the angels call him" as the poet hath it — a young man upon whom she is very anxious to make an agreeable impression, and having great admiration for my versatility as shown in my fat home epistles, she asked me to answer his letter for her. I consented with — I fear — some alacrity, but it is my nature to be obliging. In his answer he said that the letter was all that could be desired, but somehow it did not sound a bit like *her*. Then I rose in my wrath and rent my dress (really did) and said: "Don't ask any advice or assistance from me concerning the sad state of your

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affections, hereafter I'm oblivious of the fact that men exist." Indeed we never think of our teachers as men or Miss Lyman wouldn't have them here.

I hold the valuable secrets of four or five girls and have repeatedly taken oath by the great river Styx never to divulge them. Really I am quite a pillar at Vassar. You'll find me much changed, none of my youthful follies will ever be renewed — men are so frivolous.

A peripateting missionary from China told us that when a woman of quality and little feet walked across the floor she would often fall on the way. The husband would look on her with admiration and call her his "tottering lily of fascination."

That is what I call truly sublime but alas! I would be dubbed a Tiger lily.

Must stop now, the girls want me to

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talk. What a tongue I have — always going.

Feb. 20

INTENDED to write tonight but I heard such a solemn sermon at chapel we girls were obliged to do something quickly to counteract its influence. So we wrote an order for ice-cream and all its accompaniments to be sent out on Tuesday morning, as it is a holiday. If old Washington (speaking reverently) can leave Abraham's bosom long enough he will see Vassar celebrate.

Thursday, another vacation day, will be spent in prayer for colleges. We will probably take a pocket full of crackers into chapel for dinner and about midnight they will pass around mush and milk — a favorite dish here. Maybe some other plan will be arranged if

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Johnnie (President Raymond) consults me about it.

Feb. 22

ALTHO' this is Washington's birthday the Steward did not feel very patriotic for he gave us hash for breakfast. Even I did not do my whole duty, left my bed unmade, books, clothes, everywhere — was obliged to back out of the room edgewise. It all happened for the best, though, for our girls got on a "high" later and tore Abbie's room "from turret to foundation stone"; it looked worse than our sewing room in its palmiest days just before I left for college.

After silent time, which was spent in the corridor with the girls, I wrote out a world of French for three hours, then put up Abbie's hair in rolls behind and braids

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in front. It looked fine — even if I am too modest to say so!

We then wandered in the halls till dinner-time, feeling certain there would be something better than usual to eat, and hoped for ice cream. But lo! the moment we entered the dining room there were the plates of raisins and nuts staring us in the face. We had the same mixture of soup, with tomato skins floating about.

We ate very sparingly for our order would soon arrive from town and we wanted to do it justice.

Later: It came!

Nine of the “immortals” gathered round our festal board. I don’t know that “bright eyed beauty” was there, but “garlanded her hair” surely was.

We had five quarts of ice-cream in layers, candy, cake, nuts and fruit.

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The jelly rolls were glued together with tomato jelly! The fruit cake looked its best, but the cook had absent-mindedly used paregoric to flavor it. We tackled it bravely, holding our noses in the meantime, but nature rebelled.

A jollier crowd never got together in old Vassar.

The cream was delicious and we divided it with Misses Swayze and Lloyd, our corridor teachers, generously piling the dish with that nice fruit cake also.

In the morning after chapel everybody remained to hear Dr. Raymond read "Much Ado about Nothing." No words of mine can do him justice; he made the right gestures, laughed and looked sober, arch, and then pompous when representing the policeman.

He left out nothing that could add to the conception of the play.

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Report has it that he is one of the finest readers in any college. Some of the girls think there is no real feeling in him for anything he reads — it is all rhetorical and for effect. But how is it then that no one can hear him unmoved?

We felt everything he read just as though it was happening before us — not as if it were a play; he personated all the characters, using voice and gesture appropriate to each.

There are some chapters in the Bible I will never want to hear anyone else read lest it take away the impression he has left.

I never dreamed that the old thread-bare hymns we sing every day could be read so well — he even makes more to them than there really is!

I was coaxed into staying with Fannie and Belle last night and was bound not

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to sleep in the middle but they made me do it because they both wanted to sleep by me! I swallowed the comp. whole but told them if I had night-mare to be sure to waken me or something dreadful might happen.

After they were asleep and the corridor was quiet and Thomas had shuffled by on his first round, not to be back for half an hour, I took a spell; groaned, rolled, and tossed the covers, and shook the bed in convulsions of suppressed laughter while the girls worked frantically to waken me, but I would not! They were so scared they couldn't even find the gas-jet — just clawed along the wall.

As things began to get squally and the girls were about to call one of the corridor teachers, I gradually subsided and woke refreshed.

Am finishing this letter during prayer

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in chapel — sorry — will try to do better on Thursday, prayer for Colleges.

Feb. 24

ONLY seventeen weeks to stay here yet; can hardly imagine where the year has gone, but don't seem to be changed in any way as somehow expected to be.

Maybe I wanted to be better looking but there's where I get left.

Finished last night, "Life of the Ancient Egyptians," turned off the gas at ten, then tried to think over my French grammar for tomorrow's exams. I thought and thought and finally got up, closed the blinds, lit the gas and looked over heads of chapters, turned out light and fell asleep saying them over. Woke up somewhere about five, dressed, and finished the book.

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Each class has one hour and twenty minutes for exams. At last the time came to an end and the way we poor girls who did not miss a question fell on each other's necks in the corridor was affecting.

There is no dragging over lessons here; one is put through so fast it is a pleasure to study and such exhilaration to get good grades. "Every dogged worker has his day" — altho' the girls corrupt it into "doggoned."

Guess it must be sinful — this kind of life — for I enjoy it so much.

My idea of heaven is an atmosphere of study and research, with plenty of books and a whole eternity to read! — Probably just a species of intoxication, all this, for which women have no more need than for a binomial theorem.

President Raymond honored our Logic

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period for nearly an hour and puzzled us with all sorts of syllogisms.

The Elocution exams. were most attractive to the many visitors, even the mightiest trustee of V. C. deigned to visit us and made ever so many corrections: for instance, Miss Swayze had us repeat a selection after her without the text book. After the second paragraph he said, "Please try that on a lower pitch and let the pupils see which they like the better." So we tried it and then he asked our opinion. Of course we all said out as loud as possible — the former was much the better. We differed with him on every point to the infinite amusement of our teachers.

He offered other suggestions and remarked, "I give you the benefit of my experience, you may do what you like with it." A girl behind me whispered

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“Throw it to the dogs!” This Dr. is here very often and always pokes his old nose into everything. Once he went down to the laundry, saw some clothes with holes in them and made a rule that things should be mended before going to the wash, — sounds as though it might be a good idea but we are too prejudiced to say so, we just resent his meddling.

While we were at a meeting of the student body trying to cast a vote for Secretary, Julia S. tore my mind all up with the following conundrums: “What flower would spring up if John H. Raymond sat down on pins in a chair? — A Johnny jump-up.” “Why is J. H. R. in the pulpit like the rails of a R. R.? — Because he is over sleepers.” Also, “Why is Miss Lyman when she comes up on the fourth corridor like a whale? Because she only comes up to blow.”

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(Our corridor has a bad reputation.)

Belle and I changed dresses this afternoon — I looked unearthly in her Scotch plaid but did not have time to redress before four o'clock when some two hundred of us went to a funeral.

The whole Sophomore class was dressed in black with two Professors heading the procession.

Sorry to say we all laughed and talked as if it were not a solemn occasion.

At the end of the line two girls with black veils on, were dragging the corpse by an iron chain — their Trigonometry which they had finished yesterday.

We went across the road, into the garden round the head of the lake where a great lot of brush was piled; here the mourners stopped, arranged themselves in semi-circles while two of their number fastened the book to a pole in the pile.

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One girl made a speech to the effect that this monster had rendered many of their days miserable, broken their rest and puzzled their brains, so they resolved to consign it to the flames, that it might haunt them no more.

Asked if it had anything to say for itself, a voice answered from the brush that it had tried to do what it could, had sought only their improvement, but pleaded guilty to the charges.

So the fire was kindled and as the smoke rose, all joined in singing this song to the tune of "Villikins and his Dinah."

"There was a Professor in New York did
dwell
His name it was Loomis, we know him quite
well,
He wrote a big treatise on angles and
lines,

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With chapters on spheres, Surveying and
Sines.

CHO. Sing tangent, co-tangent, co-secant,
co-sign,

(Repeat and end with the last two lines of the verse).

Farewell now to Sines, now my class-mates
I say,

Let's follow not tangents but a straight-for-
ward way,

And then by "plane" sailing our port shall
be made,

In a harbor of rest by no mortal surveyed.

CHO. (as above).

As you see, it has taken two or three
days at intervals, to write this letter.

Last night after tea it was announced
that for special reasons there would be
no Bible classes in the morning.

We could not help being glad, and, as
we rarely have chapel service Sabbath

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mornings, ever so many of the girls thought they would have a good time sleeping all morning after a tiring week of examinations.

Sure enough, whole tables were empty at breakfast. Only three girls appeared at the Senior's table.

Dr. Avery rose quietly and announced chapel services at the usual time! Imagine the scuttling in some of the rooms when those at breakfast hurried to carry the bad news from "Ghent to Aix"; there were only ten minutes in which to dress, and absentees are always reported to Hannah. — (Miss Lyman).

The girls were awfully mad and declared it was a part of Alida's (Dr. Avery's) scheme to compel them to be forever on the grind.

With all this hurry whole rows were

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vacant and girls came in with tightly wrapped shawls to hide discrepancies.

Those of the Seniors who scrambled out showed their "displeasure" by sitting during the singing, a thing Miss Lyman does not allow when she is present.

Many of the teachers stayed away so they would not be obliged to report the absent students.

Yesterday I met with quite a mishap. While laughing real hard over some joke my black belt tore "clean" through. I guess it must have been too tight! It will be a lesson to me in future to be more moderate in my joy or I will ruin myself.

One more conundrum about that trustee: "If Vassar College were moved to China, where would Dr.—— go? — To Pekin."

These are not extra conundrums —

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even I can see that — they may sound flat, stale and unprofitable to you, and you may deprecate the irreverence shown when we call the heads of our Faculty by their first names in such familiar fashion as has slipped from my pen once or twice; — but in the rarified atmosphere of Vassar things appear different, such conduct is our only safety valve, the very nearest we can come to profanity when boiling with anger — 212° Fahrenheit.

March 7

AFTER morning chapel Miss Lyman presented us with a criticism of our table manners. It is better than any lecture to hear her. She enters heart and soul into her subject and says so many witty, sarcastic, and scathing things that we can enjoy all together,

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when if she but opens her mouth to us one by one — woe! woe!

The President took about six years at chapel last night to reach his point, then wound up by telling us for the fortieth time about the privileges we enjoy.

But the President, dished up in any style, is preferable to Prof. ——. At the back of the chapel we never hear a word he says, his mustache is so thick and long we can't see his lips move and I am in a mortal agony all the time for fear he is "stuck."

How are you all today? Do you get up nearly frozen, dress in five minutes, and have hash for breakfast?

But I must get to work on my Logic. Just imagine me digging away at one study from 9 till 11 every day.

It makes one think hard to understand

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it — and then one can't — and I guess Prof. Backus sees thro' us. It is like that involved sentence in "Cranford," he knows that we do not quite understand it and we know that he knows it and he knows that we know that he knows that we don't. Poor woman's mind — if it were only "instinct" now instead of "Logic," we might do better!

Yesterday I went through two cabinets of Ornithology. In one, most of the specimens were collected by Prof. Orton in South America. It is wonderfully complete even to nests and eggs of the rare-plumaged birds; but you should see the butterflies and moths so exquisitely set up and so gorgeous in coloring! What a world of labor he must have expended on these alone! They show infinite care. He is really a very gifted man.

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Afterwards I spent some delightful hours at work in the Art Gallery.

Professor gave us also short talks along special lines then suddenly excused himself and left the room. When he came back and stood by my canvas I noticed the odor of liquor on his breath. I was amazed and at first thought to speak to him about it, but concluded, wisely, not to do so. Presently he asked if I could tell he had been drinking gin? I said "I guess I could!" He laughed and then told me I was looking so horrified that he felt he must explain.

It seems he had an attack of cramps and went down to Miss Lyman to get something to relieve it. He is such a Dear, that I could not bear to feel he had a single fault.

At ten minutes after eight every one crowded into chapel to hear "Ike Mar-

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vel's" lecture especially prepared for Vassar girls on "How to make Home Beautiful."

Behind the President there came in a little man, rather fleshy, with blue eyes and iron-gray hair. His face was extremely good humored, but held also that dreamy expression which shows in so many of his writings.

His voice was rather low but carried well and one could listen for hours without strain or fatigue.

Dr. Raymond said only, "I introduce to you, young ladies, as the lecturer of the evening, Donald G. Mitchell," as tho' to say the name speaks for itself.

The lecturer spoke of the home feeling that neither distance nor time could dim — whether the visible dwelling was a mansion or a cabin, it should also be the home beautiful of the heart.

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Under the topic of books and pictures he said, not to be too fearful lest the pages of your favorite author become worn, that for his part he liked to inter-line the books he loved with his own imperfect ideas, and for no amount of money would part with those that dear friends beyond the tide had used.

What he said of the ONE who made home beautiful was as melodious as poetry: "The woman with two faces was all right if she only kept the 'best' side for those who loved her most,—not the 'artificial' side either, as the blooming roses that struck their roots deep in the fountains of life, were by far the most beautiful."

At first I enjoyed all that he said but its "sweetness" soon palled on my healthy appetite. The groove in which he would have us all run, became a little

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too monotonous for me and I refused to follow it.

Each *Soul* must be given breath and time to work out its own destiny and not swallow at one gulp the formulas and precepts of another — even a wiser — personality. Life is a process of crystallization which like granite, takes time, quiet, darkness, and sometimes upheaval, to perfect it.

They all extol our “privileges” here and admonish us to be thankful — as we really are — but why have they not started some such college as this long ago, where women could learn enough to be independent provided they can’t be set in families, and do not want to over-burden and entirely swamp some kind relative? Perhaps, too, they might like to help the parents who so generously gave their daughters this working asset —

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often as worthy an ambition in a girl as to seek shelter in a soft nest of her own.

Of course any "silly" knows a girl would prefer a home and an adoring husband of her very own and would cling to him tighter than wax. But isn't this clinging business somewhat overworked?

It is easy for a lecturer to deal in "glittering generalities" and salvey talk about the "home-grown" woman and her sphere, but when actual bread and butter must be earned — and she has a prejudice against starving — it is the well equipped woman who gets the job and is able to hold it.

I am willing to do my part in life when the time and right man come along, as is every other normal girl, but till then I will never join the rocking-chair and tidy brigade, — waiting!

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To feel capable, not handicapped, for the future is surely a pleasing sensation. It's the world-wide difference between success and failure in man or woman, and I resent being put in a class by myself.

Really, mother, this modern discussion by men in the papers, pulpit, and lectures, about "woman's sphere" and her "influence," and the eternal quoting of St. Paul's "milk of the word" to support their theories stirs up in me a kind of bitterness that I've not yet tried to analyze — it certainly is foreign to my happy-go-lucky disposition.

Is it "dregs" or "Intimations of Immortality" (please don't say imitations) that come to the top once in so often?

Man's idea of woman's inferiority lies behind all this discussion and shows in his acts: who is to blame because girls

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are not allowed to grow and develop along normal lines as boys do? Look at the restrictions on women regarding marriage, property rights, and the possession of their children; religious restrictions, educational restrictions, — man's arbitrary notions, all that he wants God to back him up in holding! This, till one's very soul feels hampered and dependent, — outraged by God and man if we believe St. Paul was always inspired.

I feel almost as savage as Job did when he said to his comforting friends, "I also could speak as ye do: if your souls were in my soul's stead."

Why, the only children that really belong to a woman are those born out of wedlock; under the law even a woman's clothes belong to her husband; — it hardly pays to get married at that rate! "Gail Hamilton" as a mentor is prefer-

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able to Professor Mitchell, with all his beatitudes.

At "theatricals" the other night one of the societies gave a change from the usual stilted selections.

One girl read "Lord Ullin's Daughter" behind the curtain while it was being acted on the stage — right Greeky, wasn't it?

They spread a big quilt at the front and two girls shook it to represent the waves of the sea; an immense clothes basket was the boat.

A man and woman rushed out to be rowed across the ferry. The man pulled out a piece of money, but the ferryman still shook his head. At last he consented for the sake of the beautiful lady, so she sat down at the edge of the stormy water (wildly waving quilt) to put on her rubbers.

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Her lover wrapped her well in a water-proof and they stepped into the boat (basket). Just as they were in, "Adown the glen rode armed men. Their trampling sounded nearer" (and it did!). In they came on broom-sticks; the waves rose higher, Lord Ullin on shore shouted "Come back, and I'll forgive your Highland chief, My daughter, oh, my daughter! 'T was vain! the loud waves lashed the shore" — the quilt grew stormier than ever and the girl with her lover's arm about her, looked back and waved her handkerchief. At that "The waters wild went o'er his child."

What do you think? our waiter has a diamond ring, we all noticed it last night at supper. The stone is set high and sparkles well. It may be paste but it wakes a chord.

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Every Saturday evening now, two of the Seniors read essays, Miss Storrs, the best Greek scholar, wrote on "Trial," — very good.

The other day when out walking beyond "Flirtation" bridge (a misnomer, Miss Lyman wouldn't let 'em) we saw some red and green pods pushing through the snow. I asked "What are they?" and one of the girls kicked off the top to inform me. Well, pole-cats aren't in it! We took to our heels like mad. — Know both forms of this indecent plant now — this outrage on fair nature — so looked it up and found its vulgar name is Skunk Cabbage, "habitat, N. Y." (Vassar College). It haunts me yet.

My stream of pen talk is getting rather shallow, lest you wish I would dam it up forever, I will stop for tonight.

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Sunday A. M.

I WOKE at exactly three minutes to breakfast, got there, but was rather loosely put together.

Went with Abbie to the Presbyterian church. Three carriages and the bus were full of "us."

The sermon was excellent from the text "I will betroth thee unto me forever," a change from the usual texts for communion wasn't it? I don't like their service nearly as well as our own, not so impressive, but I do think when the members rise to receive a new one, that the welcome, the warning, and blessing are beautiful and solemn.

March 13

BELLE and Fannie spent the night with me, our corridor teacher is away and we have loads of fun. With

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three of us in my little room I had to open the windows and when we woke this morning it was sleeting in over my bureau and our clothes. We nearly froze our feet walking over it.

March 15

PLEASE have my new riding basque made $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches around the waist. I will have to come home in a sack if I get much larger — my dresses fit and more than fit (give me fits). Dr. Avery lectured against tight lacing Tuesday morning. She never wears corsets and does not want us to. She is converting me — even me.

My hair nearly drives me wild. I can almost walk on it. Anyhow, it does fall in loose curls almost to my shoulders and neither Miss Lyman nor Prof. Van Ingen will let me do what I want to; —

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she will not let me have it cut and he laughs me to scorn when I want to put it up. I'm between the dev — no, between Scylla and Charybdi's, — begin to look like the crazy pictures of poets or Rosa Bonheur if I only had a horse to lean on.

Heard from C—— this week, says he is hampered in writing by the loss of his right thumb-nail but that another was ordered immediately. I replied with the hope it would be an improvement on the first, since, if memory served me right, the one lost was entirely too flat for beauty.

Heard also from Dr. H——, he said to answer the day I got his letter if possible, if I was a little vexed at anything in it, to wait till the next day; if I were real mad to write on the third day and scold all I wished. Same old question of

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course. Oh — some of us are going to spend a day at the Academy of Design in New York, Professor has invited us — Annie of N. B., Annie of Boston, Belle and Abbie, Patty and I, are making great plans.

The College rules regarding study hours are very strict as you know, nevertheless, during that time the girls often slip into another room to study.

Clemmie had gone over to Fannie's and they were "working away" at a heated discussion when a knock was heard and Miss Swayze followed it into the parlor to call on Belle, who is sick. Fan and Clem were frightened nearly to death — (we don't like demerits here) — Fan opened the closet, pushed Clem in and closed the door. Miss Swayze came into this room where Belle was, looking rather astonished at the

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apparent confusion, and remained half an hour. All this while poor Clem was smothering in the shallow closet and holding a big book in two fingers; she could hardly move when the door was at last opened — a regular Ginevra.

We have no idea what Miss Swayze suspects, but she asked Kate to walk up the corridor with her and Kate has not yet returned.

We are “wild” to know what she is doing.

March 20 — Sunday

ABBIE and I went into town yesterday. No pupils under twenty are allowed this privilege without a teacher. As Abbie is over twenty-one, Miss Lyman said she would borrow her year of grace and splice it on to my age which would make it all right.

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The only request made was, "Don't go to a confectioner's or a restaurant." We said "no," and kept our word.

Miss Lyman has been perfectly lovely to me. She is pleased because I taught for two years in the High School at home before coming here and has helped me in so many ways: she has given me permission to attend laboratory experiments as a spectator, in order to enlarge my previous Chemistry work — they have so many facilities here; she has allowed me to go over to the Observatory on observation nights so the universe will seem more real after a glimpse beyond the rim of the earth; she has interested herself in what I must study next year in order to be graduated here, and has offered me the advantage of the scholarship endowment saying, "My Dear, this is intended as a great honor.

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We want you to return next year.” She also said the Faculty has decided I may finish my course without German — one of the two modern languages required — for I simply cannot crowd it in next year and take Art.

They seem to think the experience gained by that two years of teaching will offset any little irregularities.

I felt almost overcome with delight at her thoughtful and unsolicited kindness when she sent for me and explained what they had agreed upon, and I told her so with tears in my eyes. She just patted my hand and said *she* was pleased too.

Oh! Abbie and I started for Poughkeepsie shortly after nine. The sun shone bright and warm, the snow was yet crisp and we walked the two miles in three-quarters of an hour. — Did a

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mess of errands for ourselves and others, and Abbie had two teeth pulled which she really did not think of doing when we started to town — but she did and I held her hand all the time. Were we not brave? I would rather, just a little, have had my task than hers.

Began the walk to the College at 1:30. The sun had played havoc with the snow; there was a perfect ocean of mud in the middle of the road and a perfect sea of water on the sidewalk.

As soon as we got out of the city the walks stopped and we plunged into the snow drifts yet remaining, almost losing sight of each other. Abbie once informed me that the Asiatics were red-headed. Vehicles passed us all the way out and as we floundered along, their occupants sometimes politely inquired if the walking was good.

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We saw the crowded Vassar omnibus coming and Abbie rushed behind a friendly black-smith shop rather than let the girls see us wading. I turned my back and by dint of calling, scolding, and laughing, got her out just as the bus passed to the infinite amusement of a group of men standing outside the shop.

At exactly three o'clock we reached the friendly halls of Vassar, having walked the last half mile on the stone wall encircling the grounds.

We were rather tired by the time the fourth story was reached, but I bathed, changed clothes and at three-thirty took a riding lesson that limbered me up and I'm feeling fine today.

Dr. Avery said in one of her lectures lately that there were few girls in this degenerate age who could walk five

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miles without palpitation of the heart or other troubles.

She ought to get friendly with us!

Monday: Three of us killed a snake this morning — a pretty way to begin a new week.

To finish this letter properly I must chronicle another feast. Emma invited Clemmie, Belle, Fannie, Kate, Etta, and me to her room to help her enjoy the loveliest home box. Needless to say we did not eat at the public crib later. Knew we wouldn't miss anything for we had ice-cream yesterday — probably had that awful (wild) Indian pudding today. I can eat anything but that and we girls are sometimes tempted to exclaim when we see saucers on the table, "Anything but Indian, Lord."

They have the faculty of elimination by substitution reduced to a fine point here.

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Oh, the word "faculty" reminds me of the way Miss Lyman, and in fact all the Professors, use it. All blame is poked on the Faculty. (Capital "F.") One of the girls wanted to go home to spend Sunday but would miss two recitations. Miss Lyman said the Faculty would not permit it; but the girl coaxed just right so Miss Lyman took a sheet of paper and wrote on it that by consent of the Faculty she might go.

I had quite a time getting rid of the music I was so foolish as to undertake. The answer to my note to the President came in Miss Lyman's familiar "fist" — "better go on if possible."

Then I determined to confer with the President in person.

He really is very tender-hearted, very easily "worked," and used always to excuse the girls on any trifling plea, so

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Miss Lyman was obliged to move up. Now, few are excused or ask to be, as it is more than your life is worth to try to run the gauntlet of Miss Lyman and her assistant, Miss Morse.

But in spite of the divinity that doth hedge our King, I supposed of course he could be seen for the asking.

Miss Morse said it would be impossible today but come tomorrow. When I went, the little body had the coolness to tell me to go first to Miss Lyman who would send me to the President if necessary.

I was obliged to take the matter up again with her, and the first sentence that greeted my ears was, "The Faculty has decided it is best for you to go on with your music."

I told her plainly that it would not pay if I did not return next year — or

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even if I came back, for there was so much special work to finish.

She asked why I did not decide now to return, was I going to be married?

I laughed at that and her face cleared. She inquired about all my plans and hopes and told me if ever I taught again to make my scholars good readers and speakers; advised me to go to Prof. Farrar's class rooms to see his method of teaching mathematics. Then she proceeded to mark out a life-course for me built along lines she had traveled. Poor woman, she did her best for me. And wasn't it really very dear of her? Never, *never*, will I hear or say another word against her!

Did I tell you Prof. Van Ingen has declared he will write a romance "The Wild Western Girl" of which I am to be the heroine, perhaps riding the very

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buffalo depicted on the coat of arms of my native State!

This is a sample of the cool, impersonal way they — the girls — discuss me, just as if I were a thousand miles away: Annie of St. John pipes up “Professor, don’t you think she has talent? She seems to have a fertile brain.”

Before the Professor has even time to snort or I to get mad, Annie of Boston remarks energetically, “She has the very old Nick in her if anybody has.”

April 16 — N. Y. letter

HERE I am at Abbie’s by the “skum of my teeth” as Al used to say. Friday — weather was dubious, but Saturday at six was fair, so we took a cab, went round to Springside for the

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Professor; this was Matthew Vassar's home and you've no idea how beautiful the grounds are. — But the train will not wait so I must move on.

We shot in and out of tunnels till the Hudson seemed broken into bits like the links of a chain; near Cold Spring is the longest and the mountain over it is called Breakneck.

The Highlands of the Fishkill range thro' which the river runs, begin about here with one enormous mound called "The Thunderer."

At West Point we could see Uncle Sam's buildings with the flag waving from the highest spire of the Institute, also from an old fortress further up the mountain.

This is the place where Benedict Arnold gained his notoriety and in the middle of the river is Constitution Island from

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which he stretched a chain to the mainland that vessels might be prevented from going up the river.

Below Tarrytown and very near the R. R. is "Sunnyside" — rather a small house with high gables and roof windows. The building is of brick plastered over to represent gray stone and half hidden in ivy.

The Palisades, further down, stand out like huge petrified tree trunks in a row as even as if their tops had been shaven like a hedge; these continue till we reach the city.

After passing thro' some wretched looking streets, we left the train at 23rd St. and took horse cars for the Academy of Design. Here the Professor pointed out to us everything worthy of admiration, and then we went below to see copies of Greek sculpture, while he gave

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a world of interesting information about the most noted.

My attention was called to a copy of the Venus de Milo hanging on the wall — just the size of the one I've been working on, so of course I went over to study it.

The crowd followed soon, and that critical N. B. Annie began immediately to draw comparisons — in my favor, glad to say — but we did not consider her a disinterested party until Professor replied that what she said was just, and more too. He then pointed out various things we were to notice closely and later compare with mine.

He never hesitates to say exactly what he thinks without a thought as to one's feelings or even the ordinary conventions:

For instance: the whole group of us

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girls was walking about the gallery one stormy Saturday when every other place made us homesick — and the Professor was with us.

He is our oasis in a sea of troubles — to mix metaphors.

Annie of Boston admired a sailor boy clinging, in a storm, to the rigging of his vessel; we agreed it was beautiful but Professor said brusely, "Not a work of art at all, legs of the boy painted too round and womanish."

It was a just criticism which we had been too ignorant to perceive unaided.

One day when one of the girls was putting in Raphael's darling little cherub holding a tablet, she felt rather timid about making the entire sketch, but worked and fussed at her canvas and could not make up her mind to complete the nude figure of the child.

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Professor walked around back of her two or three times, made some unimportant suggestions, and at last, in his blunt way, exclaimed, "What's the matter? Finish it up! Put in everything you see. What the Lord made you don't need to be ashamed of." It was a lesson to all of us. He despises any mawkish primness, so when he lectured on Greek Art at the Academy, he made us understand in some degree the reverence of the old sculptors for the beautiful as expressed in the human form divine.

Got lunch, and Professor left us with Abbie who knows the city. We walked down 5th Ave., stopped in at the beautiful hotel of that name; were attracted by a magnificent marble house which was just being finished — looked it over, found it was Stewart's new home. Went on to Broadway to Stewart's store where

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we saw one thousand clerks on the first floor.

At three we met Professor at Goupil's Book Store where we saw even finer paintings than at the Academy.

At Schau's Gallery were Bierstadt's "Heart of the Andes" oh, so cold — where nothing could live but an eagle; also Church's "Jamaica," — the perspective in the latter takes you back miles and miles to the very source of a stream that breaks in rapids at your feet. The effect is marvelous. It seems hardly possible so much country could be crowded on a single canvas.

We left Belle after crossing Fulton Ferry; she is visiting at the home of the Rev. Theodore Cuyler.

In the "Jamaica" Professor called our attention to the foreground where the flowers were too well worked out — too

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perfect — they drew attention from the theme of the painting as a whole.

Today is Easter Sunday — a rainy one — but we certainly improved the time. Went early to Trinity in Brooklyn to hear the chimes, then to St. Ann's to listen to the boy choir far up in the belfry chanting in answer to the big choir below and all responding to the service at the chancel.

Then we hurried to Plymouth. The immense square room looked bare indeed after the gewgaws and color of the other churches, but the pews were filled, also the choir loft running around three sides of the room.

The only decorations were two pots of magnificent Easter lilies heavy with bloom, standing at the outer corners of the high platform.

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The old organist was playing a wonderful voluntary on that wonderful organ and his shining bald pate kept bobbing about in the most grotesque fashion — reflected by the mirror before him on the organ.

During the “offering” Henry Ward Beecher came in, placed himself in the large armchair — the only chair — and leaned back, a pale face framed in light brown hair against the velvet cushion.

It made me feel a sort of kinship to remember what friends he and you were, father, in the old days when both preached at Indianapolis.

When he gave out the hymn his voice could hardly be heard. It was “Rock of Ages.” He did not read it nor did he any of them.

The whole congregation and choir arose and “sang in a loud voice” and no

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dragging, what is called Beecher's favorite hymn.

The sermon was very fine, being at first general, but when he came to the applications — each heart knew its own bitterness.

The first line of the closing hymn was "Soft my harp for Jesus died on Calvary" — with harp accompaniment; the last line was "Loudly sing, for Christ is risen." The organ joined in the chorus and the people thundered away.

May 1

FRIDAY was Founder's Day. The College makes everything of this celebration.

Matthew Vassar's big portrait was taken from the Gallery and hung in the chapel in front of Raphael's "Madonna" which was concealed by the decorations.

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These prevailed everywhere. Many rare plants were brought from his own green-houses at Sunnyside, notably the magnolias grown under glass.

The artistic collation brought from New York had the crest V. C. adorning ices and mimic castles that towered above our heads — built of confections.

About seven the chapel was filled with guests and girls, shortly after in walked George William Curtis with our prettiest senior, Miss Chumar, Pres. of the student body and 'fraid as death of Miss Lyman!

Next came President Raymond and Miss Parker, then Miss Lyman on the arm of Matthew Vassar, Jr.

Since it was scholars' day as well, one of them opened the exercises with an organ solo.

The President prayed, and as usual, took us 10,000 miles away while he

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prayed for all mankind; for all institutions (naming each) which had for their aim the betterment of the human race — learning in particular, — for this College, for the continuation and perpetuity of the great work its Founder intended to carry out, for the trustees, the officers, teachers, scholars, parents and friends, — then went off again to find a conclusion. After a magnificent organ solo by Prof. Ritter, Miss Chumar presented the orator of the evening.

Let us describe his general appearance: he is very tall with rather long brown hair, same colored whiskers worn Burnside, big nose, prominent cheek bones and large mouth filled with white teeth.

His lecture was far and away the best I've heard.

He spoke of colleges, — how they had been, hitherto, erected only for men be-

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cause women were not thought to need education beyond household duties lest these would be neglected; as if a woman might want to leave her baby in order to work out a quadratic equation! He quoted the opinion of Dean Swift who wished a woman to be moderately instructed in learning and have a taste for reading; mentioned Addison's and other writers' views — of how some thought it was their duty to direct an immortal soul into just such channels as pleased them.

Then he talked of the privileges women ought to have. While their sphere was home — this he does not deny — (nor do we) — if any love literature or art better than married life, that the woman should be free to choose. "Who," he asked, "is to say it was wrong for Florence Nightingale, Miss Martineau, and Maria Mitchell to do so?"

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You know what a treasure the College has in Prof. Mitchell, and how she has been justly honored abroad, so the above remark called forth the enthusiasm it deserved.

He enumerated some of the colleges for men that had been so long ago established, but that even in the last half of this enlightened century Vassar was the first fully endowed college for women. It might be that he did not know what grace in a woman was, but that for his part, Grace Darling or Ida Lewis were just as womanly as the fair lady who wore costly robes, every stitch of embroidery being a line of care on the face of one of her sisterhood, and whose pearls are tears of despair; — that if we take up any great newspaper we can see on one page an account of a woman's meeting where dress and speeches were reported

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in as ludicrous a manner as possible, and of course many of the women were not used to public speaking and were often extremists or fanatics. On the next page would be an account of a "gentleman's" party where important business was discussed, then came refreshments; toasts followed and wine flowed. Finally the last great toast was "woman," received with applause and drunken embraces while they broke out in that beautiful and expressive song "We won't go home till morning," and hiccoughed their way thither.

We went on a long ride yesterday with the Baron and Madame. He rode with me because my horse was determined to shy at the deer and wheelbarrows in the parks.

We rode fast thro' miles of lovely private grounds, in at one wide gateway

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and at last coming out at another; then to the cemetery where Matthew Vassar is buried. The grounds curve down to the Hudson, giving a beautiful view. His tomb is of pure white marble — an enormous acorn set on a pedestal — ropes and ropes of garlands about it.

We came trotting back on the main road to Poughkeepsie, thro' town to the north and finally back to College at eleven-thirty.

May 10

THE weather is wretched, with incessant rain for days, am afraid the Chinese will feel the dampness.

Let me tell you of an experience this afternoon: the Baron had excused us from riding once when it rained so we concluded not to go today. I started to the music hall and looked in the riding

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school on my way — found Nellie there, dressed for a lesson; as no one was in but Baron and Madame, they told me to get on a trotting horse just as I was and learn the jockey trot. On I jumped and went racing around the ring, Baron holding my hand and making me bounce nearly out of the saddle.

Just then in walked Prof. Backus; he looked stunned for a moment at the ghastly sight of such unconventionality at Vassar, but recovered later.

Must rush to the Library soon to read the "World," "Evening Post," "Herald," "Sun," and "Tribune," in time for our Political Economy class tomorrow or Prof. Backus will be disappointed in us.

These are some of the subjects he brings up: The Erie war carried on by the stockholders of that R. R.; transportation over the N. Y. and Erie Canal to

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the Gulf of Mexico; the Red River Rebellion and the "Soo" canal over which the British supplies want to pass; the Cuban difficulties and probable annexation; the troubles of the French and their vote taken last Sunday; the financing of their German war debt; the tariff on imported goods, etc., etc.

Today Professor brought in Horace Greeley's book on "Economy and protection of Home Manufactures." He (Prof.) certainly can explain things thoroughly and quickly too, and is a most convincing talker.

Under the head of "Lawyers," he gave us a lecture on Secretary Seward who is his "political enchanter."

We are forever pledged to tariff for revenue only as the best thing for the country, since the people stand an indirect tax more happily than a direct

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one even if the latter is considerably less than the former.

He has clearly set before us the present lamentable condition of the commerce carried on by American vessels on account of the high tariff on shipbuilding, etc.

We are free traders forever, even if England must supply the world with coal and manufactured goods — the generations to come can exploit America.

“Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest” is so simple a piece of advice that as a nation we cannot adopt it, yet individually we practice it.

I am well acquainted with the “Tammany Ring” and saw the hall itself when in New York!

Really the large view we get of national problems interests me more than any other subject unless it is the “woman question!”

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I expect yet to be assistant editor of the "Revolution" in collaboration with Mrs. Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, and between times go round lecturing with Anna Dickenson.

There goes the 10 bell — lights out, young ladies!

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Professor Orton took our Botany class on a day's expedition across the Hudson again last week. As we have had him in Mineralogy, Zoology, and Geology, you can have a faint idea how interesting he can make these trips along the rich parts of the Hudson bank.

But for solid enjoyment of every moment of the time across the river and up and down it, take note of our sketching class as it sits on the Highlands with Prof. *William Henry*.

Time never drags at Vassar.

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Abbie has invited me to stop in Brooklyn to visit her again on my way home. Won't that round out the year in grand fashion?

Sunday the President talked on "Friendship and Marriage." — Now he means to accomplish something by this, but what is it? We realize that the women of the land are by no means perfect, but, as Mrs. Poyser says, "The Lord made 'em to match the men," so we will have to let it go at that.

One of our lecturers said lately, "The ordinary man would look pretty with an angel for a wife, now wouldn't he?"

We've had any number of great men here, but I have not had time to write of all; the talk by David Dudley Field was especially interesting in view of the success of the cable.

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May 22

THESE closing days are very busy ones; and girls and Faculty alike enjoy the quiet hour when all gather for vesper services. Then Miss Lyman, tall and fragile looking with filmy lace over her silver curls, closes the service with her favorite hymn, "Abide with me."

We look out the west windows of the chapel as we sing, and feel — never again, perhaps, for us.

Just after tea "between the dark and the daylight" we are now allowed to stroll about the grounds; many of the girls are at work on their flower beds.

Some of us are leaning out the 4th floor corridor windows and have a full view of the front.

Miss Lyman, of course, is never able to go out, but Miss Mitchell, in her dark gown, walks slowly up and down with

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her hands behind her, accompanied by some of her favorite pupils. One of them I know — a girl who is plain looking, wears a “linsey-woolsey” dress, unspeakable shoes, helps around the Observatory for part tuition, but is so bright and smart every one is proud to be counted among her friends.

Miss Lyman is certainly a “leveler” in Vassar College, she makes it democratic. In the truest sense it is not what you wear but what you *are* that makes for honor here.

You feel so independent and sort of exalted when you have done your duty — if in doubt about your duty, consult HER!

It means the devotion of a life-time, but think what it would be to take a thorough course in Astronomy with Maria Mitchell, — to wheel the great dome

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round and point the equatorial to any corner of the heavens — then travel to the first stars! — all else well lost.

It is easy, in a measure, to understand the holy fervor developed by monastic life; the continuous dwelling of the mind in remote regions of thought and space creates a corresponding aloofness which could make one absolutely irritated with everyday life and its petty details — so guess I'd better potter along on a lower plane, but I would even like to be a Parsi and lie on a cliff, forever trying to figure out the eternal query, "how I came to be I and not another."

Prof. Mitchell is not that way. She is as modest, unassuming and approachable, yet reticent, as if she were much less renowned. This may be one secret of her greatness, or a sign of it, perhaps.

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May 25

WENT riding to Hyde Park, twenty miles, Saturday, starting at five A.M. Next Saturday we go to Wappinger's Falls.

Prof. Van Ingen took us sketching the other afternoon — over fences, thro' creeks and plowed fields.

When we scolded, the obstinate man said, "he guessed we might stand it if he could, when he was the most delicate one of us all."

Then he made us sit in the broiling sun while we were sketching "cool shades and running brooks." I vowed he would have five quarts of grease to carry back instead of his five fair companions.

As a crowd of us stood again in the corridor last night after tea, one of the girls said, "Oh, look out the window, there is a smash." We obeyed of course

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and saw Professors Backus and Oron sauntering along in very friendly fashion, with an arm over the other's shoulder.

We were inconsequent and silly enough to set up a shout, when one observant girl whispered, "There comes Miss Lyman!" Sure enough, down the dim corridors we could see her cap strings waving. Conversation flagged. We crowded into the window alcove till some were about crushed. As she came on, "silence how dead" fell over us.

I spoke in my most dulcet tones to my neighbor and she absent-mindedly repeated my inane remark over and over in our confusion.

We huddled like sheep, devoutly hoping she would pass us gently by, but she seated herself on a trunk just behind us.

After getting her breath she exposed the exceeding sinfulness of laughing and

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being so generally noisy, remarking at last, "I'll forget it, young ladies, this time, because I see you feel very sorry (we did not contradict this statement), and there are some of you who have never been reported to me, and who would not do wrong intentionally (here we were about to shed tears), so I'll forget it; good night, dear girls!"

Patty ran to Miss Lyman and affectionately put an arm about her, going up the corridor with her, while I helped her down the stairs and went on an errand for her — a great favor (to me — understand)!

May 30

THE weather last Friday looked dubious and felt cold, so Miss Lyman was afraid we could not go on our last sketching trip after all.

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Being general overseer of arrangements, I was in twice to consult her. Also ordered from the Steward certain unoffending things for lunch.

Took our corridor alarm clock, Belle, to bed with me.

She woke me at 4:30 to hear it rain. Got up and stared around for a little while but was too sleepy to find much fault with the weather.

The next time I knew anything it was five; one of the girls of our party came in discouraged at the dreary prospect.

We went into the hall and found the mountains clear and distinct against the sky. I said, "Let's dress anyway and have a good time together at breakfast." They all got ready, and lo, it did clear off, and the dust was barely laid on the roads.

We crowded into the bus, drove to

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Poughkeepsie where we looked in vain for the Professor. I commanded the driver to take us up the road a little way, but the old fellow pretended not to hear. After waiting in silent wrath we made up a stunner and rattled it off to him in sternest accents. The rascal just laughed and walked leisurely up to the corner. I had a great mind to climb out and lead the horses up there myself but was too much afraid Miss Lyman would hear of it. Just then the Professor hove in sight and was greeted with rousing cheers from our delicate feminine throats. Being human, he bought a lot of fruit and candy. Had a fine ride across the ferry, going to the top of the boat where the wind nearly blew us off.

We walked about a mile down the river on the Highlands to a lovely open spot where the plains of the Delectable Moun-

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tains were spread out before us — the river full of steamers, tugs, and sailboats; opposite were the suburbs of Poughkeepsie, while farther down at the bend of the river could be seen the Fishkills “fringing the southern sky.”

Just in front of us a cliff leaned out into the water and closer yet was a sloping hill checkered with farms, below which were houses and the road.

We sketched busily till twelve, then three of our number arranged the lunch.

In the meantime the Professor was painting the view. So we watched, “criticized,” and asked questions of this long-suffering man.

He made us analyze the colors as he used different shades — it is very fascinating.

In your next wood fire watch for the green color where the flame is reddest.

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After our sketches were blocked in and passed upon we ate up the crumbs and left half a bottle of delicious chow chow at a nearby house where the woman merely said, "It was no matter, we could leave it there if we chose."

Riding back over the ferry it was windy and rained slightly but the bus was waiting and we drove around to Springside where the Professor lives, then out to the college, to a nice warm waiting supper.

June 1

DR. ELIOT, President of Harvard, is here. He has been visiting Antioch and Oberlin in the west and other colleges where women are admitted with men.

He has been in at most of the recitations and told Prof. Farrar that the boys

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at Harvard could not recite nearly as well in German, French, or Latin, or even in mathematics, as the girls did here. He probed the Calculus class and not one failed in reply — and with credit to herself.

There is talk of admitting women to Harvard if girls can keep up with boys; he seems to think Vassar girls more than do it.

There is one thing people generally seem rather skeptical about till they come here and see for themselves: they don't believe that more than half of what the catalogue says is true either as to curriculum, scholarship or serious endeavor. — But Vassar speaks for herself when the audience gets within reach, — in more ways than one!

Am going on a twenty-mile trot to-morrow morning. Heavenly Day!

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June 17

HAD our Political Economy exam. this afternoon and got the very topics I would have chosen, so was delighted. But I spent the day from 4:35 A.M. going over the whole book to make my "calling and election" sure.

Afterwards went to the Art Gallery and took down my last piece of work. Found everybody in a melted state, almost beyond recognition, at thought of parting.

We have so enjoyed this year's work together, looking at it from varying foci often, but always with sympathy and appreciation for the other's view.

Took a twenty-mile ride without dismounting. Went the country road, but came back by the Hyde Park drive. The country seats on either side are as fine as any farther down the river.

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Afterwards packed and re-packed my trunks till my back is nearly broken with bending over. Oh, the lack of a — house-girl! To what will you not drive the human — back! — with apologies to Virgil. But I like even the “worry” of it all, so reserve your sympathy.

The old world will not stand still though I often wonder how it can keep on moving when there are so many last things to do and so many interruptions. I seem to be going round in a circle and never get done — a regular wheel of Ixion.

With much love and full of joy at the thought of being with you soon.

June 19 — Sunday

AFTER our labors of the week we rested well; not one of us in 97 awoke till we heard hurrying feet going

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down to breakfast. No use at that time to get ready, so visited with each other till after silent time, then Abbie and I went to the Library and both settled down to read a very large book on Equestrianism. Presently the following dialogue took place: Abbie, "Let's put this book up." Elba, "Why?" Abbie, "It is not a very good one to read on Sunday." E. "Very particular all at once, aren't you?" A. "Well, I hear a very peculiar *cough* in the room." Hint enough, the book went shut like a flash and we took up a religious paper, for Miss Lyman had just come in. She sees everything and even our backs may look guilty. Oh, the exceeding sinfulness of sin! I'll acknowledge that never in all my life have I tried so hard to keep friends with anyone as I have with her, and she has been kindness itself to

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me. She is a most remarkable woman; her personality is felt everywhere in Vassar — something after the order of the All-seeing Eye!

President Raymond took for his Baccalaureate text today "The perfect law of Liberty." As he talked the purposes of life unfolded. Restrictions that have fretted, by a keener insight grew into a few rules that make for happiness in college life and that greater life outside the doors of school; to live simply, to deal justly, and be thoughtful of others, seems a very easy job in the abstract — but it means a watch set on every little thought and act, — which might become very monotonous. Rather would I carve me a noble destiny by some one heroic act or sacrifice! — but try as I would, I couldn't think of anything great to do. And as this day-dream seemed

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too idiotic for even me to continue, I left my future to wobble as it would and agreed with our President most gratefully and cordially on the greatness of our opportunity at Vassar — the wonderful outlook for women that its Founder has perpetuated with his money and some bricks and mortar. But it is the thought behind it all that has made Matthew Vassar great.

Whatever may have been the defects of his business career, and according to his critics they have been vast, he has created for himself a far more enduring monument in the grateful hearts of his country-women than that beautiful piece of symbolism showing whitely above the Hudson: — it is what Vassar College means to all women. Matthew Vassar has built, as old Q. Horatius Flaccus has it, “a monument more lasting than brass,

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and more sublime than the regal elevation of the pyramids, which neither the wasting shower, nor the invulnerable procession of years, and the flight of the seasons shall be able to destroy."



